QUITMAN, GEORGIA
Dr. Nancy Whitfield Dennard
Mayor

Willie Burns
Interim City Manager

City of Quitman
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“It’s no surprise that this high quality-of-life city...is a location that can make any business bloom.”

QUITMAN
A Flowering Community

Known as the Camellia City, Quitman not only abounds in hundreds of these flowering trees and shrubs, it also bounds in many of the things smart companies desire — a plentiful nonunion workforce, multiple distribution lanes, access to higher education institutions and more. The area’s long growing season coupled with fertile soil invites agriculture and forestry investments while the nearby 250-acre state-certified industrial park has everything from rail service to T1/DSL communications. Quitman’s exceptional incentives include Tier 1 job credits as well as Opportunity Zone availability and low-cost public power electricity. It’s no surprise that this high quality-of-life city, which boasts a revitalized downtown plus access to some of the best outdoor recreation in the state, is a location that can make any business bloom.
FAST FACTS
QUITMAN

POPULATION: 3,804
BROOKS COUNTY POPULATION: 15,387
UTILITIES: Electric, gas, water, sewer and sanitation
HIGHWAY TRANSPORTATION: Quitman is just 24 miles from I-10 and 15 miles from I-75
RAIL: Short line rail access to CSX and Norfolk Southern
SEA PORTS: Two-hour drive to Ports of Savannah, Brunswick and Jacksonville, Florida
AIRFIELD: Nearby Quitman Brooks County Airport with 5,000-foot runway

NOTABLE EMPLOYERS:
• Rayonier, Inc. – Providing quality wood products.
• Elec-Tec – Manufacturer of wire harnesses, electro-mechanical assemblies and injection molded products since 1985.
• Langboard – Creating quality forest products.
• Crown Health Care Laundry Services – Operates as a health care laundry processor and linen rental company. This Quitman location is one of five processing facilities in the South.
• Brooks County School System – Serving public elementary to high school students.
• Presbyterian Homes of Georgia – Providing residences for 260+ retirement seniors on a 60-acre campus, Presbyterian Homes has been in the community since 1949.
• Aviagen – Building an $18 million, 75,000 sq. ft. hatchery offering approximately 100 jobs, scheduled to be completed in 2018.

“We are all working together to keep improving our city and make Quitman one of the most accommodating and business attractive communities in Southwest Georgia.”

Mayor Nancy Whitfield Dennard

• Quitman is a community of 3,804 and is the county seat of Brooks County. It has an inviting downtown with a stately picturesque courthouse built in 1859. The courthouse is just one among the numerous Quitman historic buildings that are designated on the National Register of Historic Places. The heart of downtown, a 417-acre Quitman Historic District, was placed on the Register in 1982.

• The Brooks County Industrial Park is GRAD certified by the state Department of Economic Development which means it is shovel-ready for business expansions that might be on the fast track.

• Quitman was a home of James Pierpont, author of the song “Jingle Bells” (1857), and uncle of American financier J.P. Morgan.

• The community was named for John A. Quitman, a hero of the Mexican – American War.

• Quitman was incorporated as a town in 1859 and as a city in 1904.
Team Leadership in Quitman

At Quitman’s leadership helm are two managers dedicated to leveraging the city’s existing assets, engaging the public in dialogue and building efficient city operations for its citizens. Mayor Dr. Nancy Whitfield Dennard, a former educator, took office in January and has led her citizens along with her fellow council members in round table discussions on public safety, public works, utilities, and city facilities.

“We invite discussions in committee prior to the formal council meetings in an atmosphere that is non-intimidating,” explains Mayor Dennard. “Increased public engagement dictated that we moved to a new larger space to accommodate the volume of attendees at meetings. Transparency in government drives accountability in leadership; transparency is a promise I make,” assures Quitman’s top elected official.

The city’s interim city manager, Willie Burns, has an eye for efficiency and is using technology as a means to achieve that goal in the community’s operations. Automating the utilities’ meter reading process is an initiative Burns tackled early with his January arrival. Automated Meter Reading should reduce the number of times the data is manually touched and minimizes the opportunities for human error. Employee cross-training is another key strategy Burns sees as instrumental to a well-run lean organization. On any given day, someone in administration from the police department might be doing duty in City Hall.

The leadership team of Dennard and Burns work in lock-step for the pursuit of excellence for Quitman. Burns is a former mayor himself from the City of Washington, also a MEAG Power member community. He understands the interplay of city manager, mayor and council in smart city decision-making.

Both officials have a vision about quality of life issues like jobs, housing and finding the resources and allies to accomplish these initiatives for the community. A key partner in these endeavors is the Brooks County Development Authority. It helps recruit new business and creates policy to foster a growth environment. One of the most recent businesses recruited to Quitman is Crown Health Care Laundry Services, an employer of nearly 250 people.

“Our main downtown commercial district is an important piece of our economic engine. Our commercial district is visitor-friendly for dining and shopping. We demonstrate pride in the community which may be as simple as clean sidewalks and an accommodating city employee for tourist questions,” asserts Interim City Manager Willie Burns.

With this kind of focused team leadership, a clear vision, input from citizens and honed resources, Quitman is ready for more economic prosperity.
The Brooks County Courthouse – The Brooks County Courthouse is one of two functioning Civil War era constructed courthouses left in South Georgia. Designed by architect John Wind, it was constructed with bricks made from Brooks County clay and completed in 1859.

Sheffield Monument – Betty Sheffield, developer of the well-known camellia variety of the same name, was a longtime resident in Quitman.

The Henry Gray Turner House – The Henry Gray Turner House, also known as Nocturne, is an historic site, having been built by the then U.S. Congressman in 1892. The estate includes the house, outbuildings, and 22 acres. The Quitman Garden Club is in residence here.

The Skillet Festival – The Annual Skillet Festival, the community’s signature event, is held on the third Saturday of October on the Courthouse grounds.

Lee and Pickels Drug Store – has been a mainstay in the commercial district since 1935. Antique and specialty gift shops, and clothing retailers are additional local businesses in Quitman. Popular restaurants include Coyoacan, a fun-filled Mexican restaurant, and Three Nelsons, named for a trio of family members.